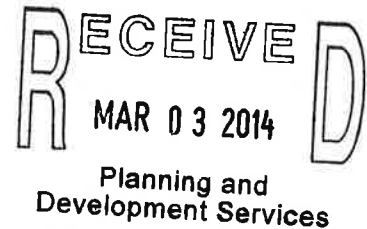


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March 1, 2014

County of San Diego  
Attn: Mr. Robert Hingtgen, Planner  
5510 Overland Ave, Suite 110  
San Diego, CA 92123



Subject: Proposed Soitec Projects in Boulevard

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I have lived in East County for over 40 years. I own property in Boulevard, Campo, and Pine Valley. When I first came here I drove on Old Hwy 80, as Interstate 8 had not yet been built. I remarked how beautiful the drive was from Jacumba through Boulevard into Pine Valley. I loved the unspoiled mountains views, the oak and pine trees, vegetation, animals and unbelievable sunrises and sunsets; the beautiful views unspoiled by commercialization and/or industrialization.. We bought this small ranch in Boulevard about 5 years ago thinking we would live out our lives here in this beautiful rural setting.

When we bought this property from Fannie Mae, nothing was disclosed about future commercial or industrial development of this area. We, the community, are against any commercial or industrial development. I have medical issues that require me to live in a quiet peaceful setting, which is part of the reason we moved here in the first place.

My issues against this type of development are:

**1.FIRE THREAT.** Solar panels run extremely hot, electrical equipment fails and catches fire, inverters run hot, and wiring overheats and catches fire. All of the above can be damaged by our local residents, birds of all types, rodents, rats, mice, kangaroo rats, gophers all love to gnaw through electrical equipment, starting fires. I base the above statement on my 40 plus years working for military as a Fire Marshall and as an

Engineer for FAA, maintaining underground and high voltage utilities at San Diego airports.

FAA requirements far exceed electrical code for materials, installation, and mechanical protection than these Soitec installations. The FAA specification won't tolerate equipment failure, especially fires. We have already had one fire started by the Indians' wind turbines.

This fire started with complete destruction of the wind turbine, which apparently has no remote maintenance monitoring (fire or temperature) or fire suppression systems. Thank God the fire started on a calm, windless day (a rarity in Boulevard). Without the quick response of many fire agencies, including aircraft, this fire could easily have gotten out of control and burned East County, maybe into San Diego. It has happened before in the 1970's, as well as the more recent Cedar fire.

Also, what a lovely sight that burned out windmill is to local and out of state travelers on Interstate 8. San Diego's tourism industry is supported by its beauty and atmosphere, not by ugly industrial projects and fear of wildfires.

County Supervisors and Fire Management / Fire Chiefs please take note! We certainly don't need a tragedy like Yarnell, AZ. Nineteen fire fighters are dead because of an out of control wildfire, wind, and shortage of resources.

**2. WATER.** You can't live and you can't extinguish fires without water. We are told it will take billions of gallons of water to construct the Soitec projects. We already used millions of gallons to construct the Sunrise Powerlink. What about the millions/billions needed to maintain and wash all of those panels? I have a shallow well of less than 100 feet. What am I to do when my well runs dry? We are told Soitec has no legal responsibility. What about the County? Will they drill me a deeper well 800 or 1000 feet deep (or more) so we can survive? Why would our President, Governor, Board of Supervisors and others would even think of a project like this when our state is in a State of Emergency over water?

California water authorities state they may not be able to supply water to its cities due to the worst drought in 400 years. Emergency water restrictions are in effect for San Diego. We need water for farmers to grow food, look at the Central Valley.

We drove for several hundred miles through dead fields of agriculture along Interstate 5, no water. I like to eat and you need water to grow food. All these billions of gallons of water San Diego County proposes to waste on Soitec might someday be all that SD County has to keep people alive. Lake Morena is almost empty and it's usually full at this time of year.

Projects of this type should be placed on isolated Federal, State, and County land where no impact will be realized on citizens! Government owns millions of acres of such land. Use it. Not Boulevard or other communities where families live. This is a very close family community where families with children feel safe, except maybe for the sex offenders placed out here by the County.

Water and Fire personnel, please, please take note! Our safety and health are in your hands!

**3. PROPERTY VALUES.** Realtors tell me values have already dropped due to the Sunrise Powerlink. The Sunrise Powerlink fire mitigation grant speaks to this as increased fire danger and falling property values. Do you think the Soitec projects and increased SDG&E transformer, substations, and powerlink will not decrease them further?

Soitec states this is a test of its product heavily subsidized by the federal government. Soitec is using Boulevard as a proving ground (Patrick Brown's words from Soitec). There are many abandoned test sites / proving grounds all over this country. In most cases the sites are abandoned in place leaving the old equipment and pollution to be cleaned up by others. Even the US Government does this; i.e. the Air Force radar site on Mount Laguna leaving all equipment, leaking fuel tanks, leaking transformers, etc.

Will San Diego County and its taxpayers be saddled with the cleanup expense?

**4. HEALTH.** I'm sure Soitec won't be using RoundUp to keep their sites weed free. They will probably be using ground sterilants. I have Type II Diabetes and Myasthenia Gravis caused by exposure in the military to Agent Orange and other chemicals in Trans oil. I don't need any more exposure to chemicals and herbicides. If you don't care about me, at least please think about the children and unborn.

EMF – Here again my health and the health of the community is at great risk. This project should never be placed close to humans. I use medical equipment every night to sleep. What if you have a pacemaker or controlled diabetic injection? Experimental power projects should be placed on government land in the desert or over water so that there are no fire, public health, safety, wildlife, noise, property value issues and no degradation of community and family life.

**5. JOBS.** This will create no jobs in Boulevard other than low paying labor. I know of only 1 other electrical engineer living in the area that would be technically qualified, other than me, to work on such systems.

I will close as I know you folks will spend a lot of time (I hope) reading these comment letters. The bottom line is this project, especially with the amount of water to be used, does not belong in our community.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill and Peggy Hopkins

